



Looking Ahead to 2001 Legislature

Now that Montana's summer travel season has hit, it's hard to imagine concentrating on anything but hiking, camping, fishing and tinkering in the garden. However, with just five months until the 2001 legislature, there are many folks in the state who are spending their summer days gearing up for the new session.

The Future of the Past committee has been meeting since January to develop a unified voice that presents the legislature a well-defined plan on how to fund our state's historical and cultural treasures for the long term.

According to Matthew Cohn, Director of Travel Montana, there has been a groundswell within the tourism industry and Montana's historical communities to come to some consensus on how to maintain and enhance the cultural sites that are important to our residents and visitors. This committee is taking a proactive approach by trying to find a workable solution before the legislature convenes in January.

The 14-member committee is comprised of six legislators and two members each from the Montana Historical Society Board of Trustees, the Montana Heritage Commission, the Tourism Advisory Council and the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission. The committee will hold its fourth and final meeting September 13 in Missoula. Recommendations from this meeting will be presented to the legislature.



Webdate

More than 1.1 million visitors cruised Travel Montana's consumer Internet site visitmt.com from January 1 through June 30, 2000. This is a 24 percent increase from the same time period last year with 875,000 visitors.

Two of Travel Montana's specialty sites experienced major user visits. Wintermt.com hosted 218,000 visitors, a 56 percent increase from 1999, and montanakids.com saw a 45 percent increase with 228,000 users.

Forty-three Montana hotel rooms have been booked through a direct link from Travel Montana's website to WorldRes Inc., one of the largest online reservation services in the world. Online reservations for Montana properties have doubled since

Travel Montana implemented the program in February 2000. According to WorldRes, consumers are getting the results they want once they find the site. Travel Montana continues to drive consumers to the website through all of our marketing campaigns.

New Faces at Travel Montana

Travel Montana welcomes two new members to our staff. Rose Bond will serve as Matthew Cohn's administrative assistant and Brian Pierce has been hired as a programmer/analyst for the Electronic Marketing Department. Vicki Munson has left her post as the Cultural Tourist Specialist to pursue other opportunities. Good luck to all with your new positions.

Did You Know?

- ◊ *Montana The Magazine of Western History*, published by the Montana Historical Society, has won four first place Western Heritage Awards.
- ◊ Bigfork and Red Lodge were hailed as America's most charming out-of-the-way small towns in a new book, *Guide to Small Town Escapes*.
- ◊ Big Mountain and Big Sky were ranked as two of North America's "Top 30 Summer Resorts" by *Ski* magazine.
- ◊ Thirty-two articles with a circulation of 13 million resulted from the January 1999 Society of American Travel Writers Western Chapter Meeting in Whitefish. Travel Montana, Glacier Country and the Flathead CVB hosted the meeting.
- ◊ The Historic 10th Street Bridge in Great Falls will be the only Montana site featured in a National Geographic book, *Saving America's Treasures*.
- ◊ The Beartooth Highway, the town of Red Lodge and the Pollard Hotel were featured in the June issue of *Sunset* magazine.
- ◊ Chico Hot Springs Resort celebrated its 100th birthday in June.
- ◊ The town of Philipsburg is a semi-finalist for the "Prettiest Painted Places in America," sponsored by the Rohm and Haas Paint Quality Institute in Philadelphia.

Correction: The July Update reported that first quarter "bed tax" collections for 1999 were \$1.82 million. The figure should have read \$1.89 million with more than \$2 million collected for the same three month period in 2000. We apologize for the error.

Local Grants Awarded by Lewis and Clark Commission

Seventeen Lewis and Clark-related projects were awarded \$200,000 in grant funds by the Montana Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission. The award recipients were sponsored by local communities and nonprofit groups across the state as part of Montana's efforts to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the famous expedition.

The \$200,000 grant is comprised of \$50,000 in "bed tax" funds from the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission, a \$50,000 grant from US West and a \$100,000 grant from the Montana Department of Transportation. With the grant's match requirement of \$1 in local funds for every \$2 the grant provides, this program is creating at least a \$300,000 investment in Montana's preparation for the upcoming Bicentennial.

As an incentive to both public and private sector investors, the Tourism Advisory Council has committed \$50,000 from Travel Montana's Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP) for the Commission's 2001 Lewis and Clark project grants program. These state lodging tax funds come with the requirement that the Commission and at least one other funding partner each provide \$50,000 for the 2001 grant program.

For a complete list of project awards visit www.montanalewisandclark.org and click on funding.

Round-Up News

Travel Montana's Group and Overseas Marketing Manager, Pam Gosink, reports that this year's RMI summer Round Up was a success. Thirty four operators and media from Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and our newest market, Italy, attended the marketplaces held in Spearfish, South Dakota and Cheyenne, Wyoming. Our overseas representatives also attended to make appointments and learn more about the tourism products in the region. Leads from the Round Up are available on Travel Montana's Intranet site, www.travelmontana.state.mt.us. Click on our programs/overseas. Dates for the next Round Up will be announced in the coming months. For a hard copy of the leads contact Pam Gosink at 406-444-4384.

Pam also notes that a record 22 folks participated in the pre- and post- familiarization tours in Montana and Idaho. Special thanks to the Big Hole National Battlefield, World Museum of Mining, Virginia City, Nevada City, Bale of Hay Saloon, Museum of the Rockies, Wineglass Mountain Outfitters, the Fly-Fishing Federation Museum, Lonesome Spur Ranch, Fun Adventures, and the cities of Butte, Livingston, Bozeman and Billings for your assistance.

It's A Wrap— Film Office News

Whoa...where have all the commercials gone?

Last year it seemed like a national commercial was being shot everywhere you looked

in Montana. This year is a different story. Unfortunately, Montana is being affected by the two-month-old Screen Actors Guild (SAG) strike against commercial producers. This means that while commercials can be made, they can't use actors. That includes the drivers who appear in the many car commercials usually shot here.

July Media Projects

- *Marker Magazine* (Japan)—Still shoot in Bozeman area.
- Lexus—Still shoot in Red Lodge area.
- Epson Studios—Still shoot of Custer Reenactment in Hardin area.



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Calendar of Events

August

- 24-30 Making Tracks through Glacier National Park Media Tour, Glacier Country
- 26-31 Clark on the Yellowstone Media Tour, Yellowstone Country

September

- 6-12 Women's Outdoor Adventure Media Tour, Gold West/Russell Country

*For all of the latest Montana tourism industry
information log on to Travel Montana's Intranet site:
travelmontana.state.mt.us.*



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